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paradigms and the grind of grammar, or those who condemn the study of Latin on the basis—as most adverse critics do—of second- or third-hand acquaintance with it, take the trouble to investigate by going into an approved high-school or college classroom today. They will not find perfection, of course, either in subject or teacher; but they will find a dignified and worthy subject, full of interest to the pupils, and lending itself to clear, orderly, and incisive presentation, and they will find a teacher filled with enthusiasm. Lacking the opportunity of investigation at first hand, let them read Professor Harrington's book.

GRANT SHOWERMAN

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Composition in Narration. By JOSEPH RUSSELL TAYLOR. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. 129. \$0.80.

Short Themes: A Freshman Manual for the First Semester. By ARTHUR HUNTINGTON NASON. 2d ed. University Heights, New York: Published by the Author, 1910. Pp. viii+187. \$1.25.

The Forms of Discourse; with an Introductory Chapter on Style. By WILLIAM B. CAIRNS. Revised ed. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1909. Pp. xiv+358. \$1.15.

Writing and Speaking. By CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909. Pp. xvii+445.

There may be nothing new to be said in a textbook of rhetoric, but there are different ways of saying the old things. These four books, written for colleges, are made predominantly on one or the other of the two general theories that may lie behind books of this kind: that the student is to be stimulated, or that he is to be informed. Mr. Taylor's book on narration, made on the former theory, is perhaps the most successful of the four. It has so whole-heartedly the courage of its convictions, and is written with such energy and simplicity, that it quite notably makes its point. The subject helps it, no doubt; narrative is stimulating, and is, in itself, helped more by high spirits and enthusiastic imagination than any other kind of writing. But the book does more than encourage: it follows the procedure of narration from the first processes of collecting material, to the ultimate processes of bringing the imagination to bear, with a sane insistence upon the fact that narrative must be worked out, not for "effect," but to reveal the genuine human values in event and situation. What is most stimulating in the book is the fact that the illustrations are the writer's own; the student seems to be present at the very creation of the thing he is going himself to essay. He sees the process; he sees the results; and he sees that they are good. The attempt has the fine audacity, tempered by good judgment, that seizes and stimulates the reader's impulse and imagination.

Mr. Nason's book on *Short Themes* has something of the same purpose; or as much of it as would be retained if we should use the word "batter" instead of "stimulate." Written expressly for college Freshmen it makes a spirited attempt to adjust its treatment to its audience. It is unhackneyed, full of anecdotes of the popular college kind—bait upon which the unwary may nibble and be caught on the hook of instruction. The notable result is a matter of

manners; and whether the book is liked or not will depend largely upon whether the teacher likes to put into his pupils' hands so jaunty a treatment of his subject. "Gentlemen," cries the writer at the end of his first chapter, "here at college you will find that experience—concrete material—is lying around loose." The book is divided into two parts: "Of the Practice of Composition," and "Of the Theory of Rhetoric." The proportions of the first part seem to indicate that the writer believes objective material to be more important to composition than thought.

In *The Forms of Discourse* Dr. Cairns has revised his first edition of twelve years ago. Those who know the older book can best estimate the changes from the following sentence of the new preface.

"Among the more noticeable changes . . . are the rearrangement, in what seems a more logical order, of parts of Chapters I, II, and IV; the rewriting of the section on the short story and some other sections of Chapter II; the introduction in Chapters III and IV of several sections dealing with the practical uses of description and exposition respectively; and the addition to Chapter V of a section on the planning of argumentation and brief-making."

The book is in the main based on the theory that the student is to be informed; and if it errs slightly in informing him so thoroughly that there seems little function left for the intelligence of the teacher, it has for the greater part arranged this information helpfully. It follows the logical division into chapters on narration, description, exposition, argumentation, and persuasion. The "Introductory Chapter on Style" is not so happily arranged; its division into "principles based on conventional usage" and "principles based on laws of mind" would hardly be helpful to a learner who is looking for help in performing a process which he certainly does not subdivide on this basis. This chapter, however, is short, and by no means spoils a book of such established excellence as *The Forms of Discourse*.

The difficulty noticed in the introductory chapter of Dr. Cairns's book pursues with disastrous effect Dr. Baldwin's *Writing and Speaking*. It is a book of a tremendous amount of information, and, open it where you will, the information is interesting. If it succeeds it will succeed because of its interest, its pungent style, its effective way of putting details; it will succeed in spite of the confusion of its plan. And it may very well succeed; manner, as we all know, is a more important thing in teaching than method. One cannot help regretting, however, that so effective a manner as Dr. Baldwin's could not have been combined in this book with a method that would be of help to both teacher and student. The division of the material seems to be made on the basis of the qualities of style—interest and clearness. Between these topics it alternates confusingly, and only in scattered subdivisions does it cover the actual processes through which a writer goes in the practice of writing. If a student were, say, answering the assignment, "Tomorrow be interesting," or "Tomorrow be clear," then this text would be of systematic help. When the moment came and he was aware that now he must be interesting, or now he must be clear, he would have the proper section of organized knowledge to aid him in the process. But he is not answering such an assignment. He is writing an exposition, or a description, or a paragraph, or a sentence. These are the processes he is conscious of, and these are, consequently, the lines upon which his knowledge

can be most helpfully organized. In the teaching of any art it is the process which is taught; the process in the art of writing is in the thing the writer is trying to do, rather than in the quality he is, incidentally, trying to characterize it by. He is trying to write an interesting description; not trying to be descriptively interesting. He is trying to write a clear exposition; not trying to be expositively clear. None the less, when all is said, the book remains interesting, and that will redeem many a fault.

The Mechanics of Writing: A Compendium of Rules. By EDWIN C. WOOLLEY. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1909. Pp. xxxi+396. \$1.00.

Written English: A Guide to the Rules of Composition. By JOHN ERSKINE and HELEN ERSKINE. New York: The Century Co., 1910. Pp. viii+70.

The weary reader of themes cannot open Dr. Woolley's book without being greeted by one or another of the 590 things that he wishes his students knew about English usage—590 because it is believable that this book covers, in its 590 sections, the whole field of those common errors over which he spends so repetitiously the energy he would like to devote to the more intellectual parts of his task as a teacher. This admirable book is a "compendium of rules regarding manuscript arrangement, spelling, the compounding of words, abbreviations, the representation of numbers, syllabication, the use of capitals, the use of italics, punctuation, and paragraphing." Its manner of presentation, with marginal gloss, with the wrong form clearly marked "wrong" and the corrected form clearly marked "right," with clear explanation and illustration, and with full indices, is admirably adapted to its use both as a book of ready reference and as a book of systematic study. Exercises at the end, adapted to the various parts of the text, increase the number of sections to 753. To these is added "a grammatical vocabulary explaining grammatical and other technical terms."

Written English is an attractively bound little book of the same kind but much briefer in scope and treatment. It is supplemented with chapters on letter-writing, prosody, and the commoner improprieties.

SHERLOCK B. GASS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

The Legal Status of Rural High Schools in the United States, with Special Reference to the Methods Employed in Extending State Aid to Secondary Education in Rural Communities. By EDWIN R. SNYDER. (Columbia University Contributions to Education, No. 24.) New York: Columbia University, 1909. Pp. vii+225.

The author has divided his problem into two lines of investigation: first, an analysis of the legal situation in each state in regard to special state aid to high schools; second, an analysis of the effect produced by these laws. Three classes of laws exist: those that give special aid only by subsidies; those that give aid only by providing tuition; and those that provide for the payment of both subsidies and tuition. Nineteen states, at the time of the investigation, gave special aid to their high schools. After a careful study of the legal and actual situation,